

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1. (Previously Presented) A protection device for a stator of a turbine comprising a series of annular sectors which can be coupled by a connector, each sector comprising a first side surface which has at least one cavity equipped with a bottom, wherein each bottom of said at least one cavity is convex and in that each sector comprises at least one stiffening rib positioned inside said at least one cavity and having a variable section in a longitudinal direction to modulate the rigidity of each sector.
2. (Previously Presented) The protection device according to claim 1, wherein said bottom is convex in a circumferential and/or axial direction.
3. (Currently Amended) The protection device according to claim 1 or 2, wherein said convex bottom has an apex which in an axial section has an axial curvature radius  $[[70]]$  which, divided by the radius of the rotor, has a value preferably ranging from 0.221 to 0.299.
4. (Previously Presented) The protection device according to claim 3, wherein said axial curvature radius, divided by the radius of the rotor, has a value equal to 0.260.
5. (Previously Presented) The protection device according to claim 3, wherein said apex in a radial section has a circumferential curvature radius which, divided by the radius of the rotor, has a value preferably ranging from 0.365 to 0.494.
6. (Previously Presented) The protection device according to claim 5, wherein said circumferential curvature radius, divided by the radius of the rotor, has a value equal to 0.429.

7. (Currently Amended) The protection device according to claim 3, wherein a distance from one end of said at least one cavity to said apex in an axial section ~~has a distance from one end of said at least one cavity, said distance~~ divided by an axial length of said at least one cavity has a value ranging from 0.142 to 0.192.
8. (Previously Presented) The protection device according to claim 7, wherein said distance divided by an axial length of said at least one cavity has a value equal to 0.167.
9. (Previously Presented) The protection device according to claim 1, wherein with respect to the axis of the turbine, said rib along an axial direction is tilted by an angle which ranges from 3.162° to 4.278°.
10. (Previously Presented) The protection device according to claim 9, wherein said angle is 3.72°.
11. (Previously Presented) The protection device according to claim 1, wherein said rib has a maximum axial height which, divided by the axial length of said at least one cavity has a value ranging from 0.133 to 0.180.
12. (Previously Presented) The protection device according to claim 11, wherein said maximum axial height, divided by the axial length of said at least one cavity has a value equal to 0.156.
13. (Previously Presented) The protection device according to claim 1, wherein each sector comprises a sheet equipped with a series of pass-through holes which is fixed to said at least one cavity.

14. (Previously Presented) The protection device according to claim 13, wherein said sheet is integral with the corresponding sector of said series of sectors.